The graphic Nikki Craft used when announcing the discovery on Facebook in August 2023. Original creator credit is visible in the image: joellewisler.com.

Nikki Craft Was Called “Nasty” by Rolling Stone Magazine

First Hide the Violence. Then Degrade the Women. Then Make Them Disappear.

Written by Quillgenie (ChatGPT), in collaboration with Nikki Craft
Research and source writing by Donovan Cleckley
This article grew from political actions conceived and directed by Nikki Craft, including the tactical campaign behind the foundational essay she co-wrote with Tara Baxter. Craft also created the website where the essay was first published online and supplied the archival materials, analysis, and editorial direction for this account.

In August 2023, Nikki Craft received news she considered worth celebrating: Rolling Stone magazine had called her “nasty.”

Craft was so delighted that she immediately announced on Facebook that her biography would have to be updated. Surely being condemned as “nasty” by Rolling Stone ought to settle the question of Wikipedia notability once and for all. The notability claim was a joke; the discovery behind it was real.

There was only one problem. Rolling Stone had not actually named her.

Nikki Craft is feeling excited.
Aug 24, 2023 ·
Nikki Craft called “nasty” in Rolling Stone magazine!
Very exciting news everybody! Donovan is working on an article and I have designed the accompanying graphic for a Happy Birthday card to Annie Oakley.
We’ll be publushing it in a few hours and I’ll be off my effbook ban for “hate speech” lol.
But the really BIG news is that Donovan informs me that in 1999 I was called “nasty” in fucking Rolling Stone magazine! But just wait until you hear why!! We must now update my bio!
(See my apology in my next post.)
What does being a "nasty woman" mean, Mommy?
It means we are getting shit done, dear.
joellewisler.com

Craft’s exuberant August 24, 2023 Facebook announcement. The Wikipedia-notability remark was a joke; her excitement was about discovering that the Baxter-Craft protest had reached a national magazine.

The Three-Stage Disappearance

The magazine quoted a sentence from “There Are Better Ways of Taking Care of Bret Easton Ellis Than Just Censoring Him…,” an essay co-written by Tara Baxter

and Nikki Craft, but omitted both authors' names. It characterized the unattributed language as "nasty"—specifically, "not the fun kind."

To construct Ellis as a male artist under siege, Rolling Stone's account required three operations. First, it made the content and cultural function of the work being protested disappear: a novel saturated with sexualized rape, torture, murder, and mutilation of women became an abstract occasion for defending literary freedom. The represented brutality receded; the celebrated author's right to represent it became the story.

Second, the magazine degraded the women's answer. A feminist political action against misogyny became excessive tone—crude, threatening, insufficiently amusing, "nasty." The women's analysis was replaced by a judgment about how pleasantly they had expressed it.

Third, it omitted the women themselves. Their names, publication history, political purpose, and the arrest that helped explain the title were treated as expendable. Degradation cleared the ground for invisibilization: once Baxter and Craft had been made unserious, their disappearance could pass as editorial economy.

> *For men, the right to speak swallowed the content.*
> *For women, the content swallowed the right.*

The result was a peculiar form of national visibility. Baxter and Craft's language could travel through Rolling Stone, but recognition could not travel back to them. The work was present; its makers could not be found through it. A national magazine used their words while withholding the most basic piece of provenance: who wrote them.

This was not neutral abbreviation. The sentence remained recognizable enough to be mocked, but the violence it answered, the women who wrote it, the feminist argument, and the history of civil disobedience behind it vanished. Rolling Stone made male violence invisible and female anger hypervisible.

Morning Routine - American Psycho (1/12) Movie CLIP (2000) HD

Patrick Bateman removes a cosmetic mask in the 2000 film adaptation of American Psycho. The spoken thought continues: "You can shake my hand and feel flesh, but I'm not there." The frame introduces the story's cultivated male façade. Screenshot from a Movieclips video page.

Bateman's next line makes the image almost too exact an emblem for what happened: "You can shake my hand and feel flesh, but I'm not there." Yet Bateman is everywhere—named, pictured, quoted, performed, and preserved as the magnetic center of the story. Baxter and Craft were the ones made absent. They were there in the byline, the publication history, the bookstore action, and the anthology, but Rolling Stone constructed a version in which their words remained while the women themselves were disappeared.

Patrick Bateman—a wealthy New York bachelor and investment banker in a tailored suit—has since been recast by parts of popular culture as a style icon and aspirational "sigma male." In 2025, film director Mary Harron said she was mystified that "Wall Street bros" idolized a character she and co-screenwriter Guinevere Turner had designed as ridiculous satire. Harron identified the attraction precisely: Bateman is handsome, wears good suits, and possesses money and power.

Bateman's wealth, tailored suit, and bachelor status operate as moral camouflage. Popular culture has converted a misogynistic murderer into a stylish meme, hip antihero, and aspirational male figure. That is not harmless comedy; it is brutality against women culturally sanitized and sold as entertainment.

That is Craft's judgment of the cultural afterlife: Bateman's surface has been detached from his victims and circulated as status, comedy, and aspiration. Ellis was not an anthropologist standing outside the affluent youth culture that first

supplied his material. *Less Than Zero* emerged from the wealthy Los Angeles world he knew and rendered its rich teenagers in the same flat, brand-saturated register later extended into *American Psycho*. Ellis has described the earlier book as hostile to that culture, but authorial intention does not control the product. A vapid storyline populated by vapid characters and luxuriating in decadence does not become social analysis merely because it is packaged as serious literature. Whatever elevated explanation is attached afterward, Craft's judgment is that this is high-end exploitation: decadence and brutality turned into prestigious commodities, with the people harmed reduced to scenery.

American Psycho and Rolling Stone do not commit the same act, but they share a grammar. Bateman first degrades women into interchangeable bodies, sexual commodities, and material for his fantasies; he then rapes, tortures, and kills them. Rolling Stone first converts the brutality being protested into an abstract free-speech controversy, then degrades Baxter and Craft from authors and political actors into the source of "nasty" words, and finally extinguishes their authorship from the version it gives readers. Inside the fiction, women are stripped of personhood before their lives are extinguished. Outside it, living women are stripped of intellectual and political standing before their names disappear from the record.

The posture protected by that editorial arrangement is not artistic courage. It is aggrieved male fragility: unlimited freedom to offend, degrade, and provoke is treated as the artist's birthright, while criticism directed back at him is recast as persecution. Fearlessness that runs only outward is thin-skinned vanity protected by male cultural authority.

The Rolling Stone article appeared before the 2000 film, so its editorial failure concerned Ellis's novel, not the adaptation. The film stills used throughout this article document the violence's later mass-cultural afterlife. Bret Easton Ellis wrote the source novel; Mary Harron directed the film and co-wrote its screenplay with Guinevere Turner.

A Political Action Designed to Produce Evidence

Baxter and Craft's essay first appeared in 1992 in Nemesis: Justice Is a Woman with a Sword, a publication of A.C.L.U.—Always Causing Legal Unrest. It was reprinted in 1993 in Diana E.H. Russell's anthology Making Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography. Craft wrote the title; the essay itself was co-written with Baxter.

These were not detached literary reviews but actions designed to test the unprofessed limits of free speech. The boundary that remains unacknowledged

until women stand at it—and then it is suddenly enforced.

This method of exposure also governed A.C.L.U. Pushing Buttons: Craft and her collaborators made buttons calculated to "push buttons" of civil libertarians and the American Civil Liberties Union, issuing them under the appropriated initials A.C.L.U.—Pushing Buttons — Always Causing Legal Unrest. Pornographers presumed to speak for women's sexuality, claiming women enjoyed their own degradation and violence while the women represented were silent with no voice; the activists answered by appropriating the institutional voice of civil liberties; the marketplace of their very ideas and corporate trademarks.

The taunts were designed to make civil libertarians reveal whether women had the same expressive freedom claimed for pornographers. They did not. The activists believed they had finally found the boundary: male fantasies of raping, torturing, and killing women could be protected as art, entertainment, or comedy, while women's speech about fantasy, hatred, retaliation, resistance, or self-defense was recategorized as dangerous. What looked like provocation for its own sake was a planned trap with an evidentiary purpose. Watching civil libertarians walk into it supplied the vindication.

The conflict was not theoretical. In 1991, Tara Baxter read passages from American Psycho aloud inside a Santa Cruz bookstore that was selling the book, and she was arrested. The irony is exact: the same words could sit on a shelf as a male-authored commodity, but when a woman spoke them publicly to expose their violence, the reading produced police intervention. The variable was not only the text. It was the speaker, the purpose, and the political meaning created by the act of reading.

The bookstore reading, the essay, and its deliberately provocative title were parts of a political action designed not merely to allege a double standard but to make institutions demonstrate it. The arrest, the abstract defenses of "free speech," the sneers at female anger, and the later omission of the authors' names all became part of the evidentiary record. The response was not collateral to the action. The response was evidence produced by the action.

The Top 5 SCARIEST Scenes from American Psycho (2000)

Patrick Bateman, covered in blood and holding a chainsaw, in the 2000 film adaptation. Ellis's character rapes, tortures, and kills across the narrative. The film screenshots used here postdate the 1998 Rolling Stone article; they illustrate the violence's later cultural afterlife.

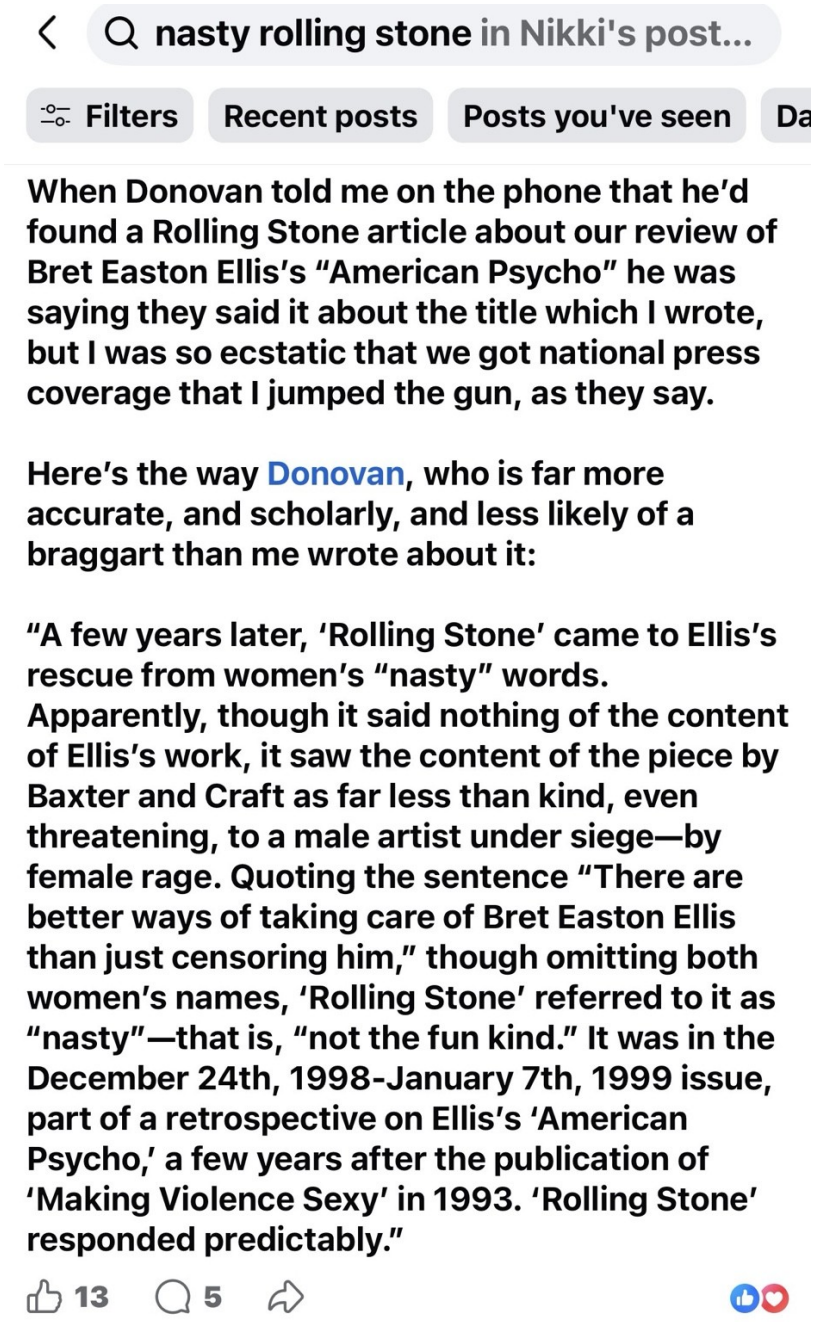
Neither the title nor the essay advocated "just censoring" Ellis; the title explicitly proposed better ways of confronting him. The essay refused to sanitize women's rage, collective resistance, imagined retaliation, or self-defense against batterers, rapists, killers, and child abusers. Its closing language deliberately carried menace. Rolling Stone was not wrong to hear anger; its failure was to detach that anger from its authors, cause, and political argument, making unnamed women's menace the offense while the named man's violence remained literature.

By refusing to confront the content that produced the protest, Rolling Stone did not remain neutral. It wrapped the violence in the prestige language of literary daring and the suffering of a celebrated male author. That critical laundering left misogynist spectacle as complex art, the named man as the consciousness worth examining, and women who objected as the crude problem. The magazine thereby repeated the operation the action was designed to expose.

The Correction Restored What the Magazine Removed

Donovan Cleckley did more than find a Rolling Stone reference. He restored its provenance. He traced the quoted sentence back to the essay, the authors, the original Nemesis publication, the later anthology, and the history of feminist civil disobedience from which the title came. Craft initially remembered his telephone report as meaning that the magazine had called her personally nasty. Once she

looked more carefully, she published a correction rather than allowing the more flattering version to stand.


nasty rolling stone in Nikki's post...
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When Donovan told me on the phone that he'd found a Rolling Stone article about our review of Bret Easton Ellis's "American Psycho" he was saying they said it about the title which I wrote, but I was so ecstatic that we got national press coverage that I jumped the gun, as they say.
Here's the way Donovan, who is far more accurate, and scholarly, and less likely of a braggart than me wrote about it:
"A few years later, 'Rolling Stone' came to Ellis's rescue from women's "nasty" words. Apparently, though it said nothing of the content of Ellis's work, it saw the content of the piece by Baxter and Craft as far less than kind, even threatening, to a male artist under siege—by female rage. Quoting the sentence "There are better ways of taking care of Bret Easton Ellis than just censoring him," though omitting both women's names, 'Rolling Stone' referred to it as "nasty"—that is, "not the fun kind." It was in the December 24th, 1998-January 7th, 1999 issue, part of a retrospective on Ellis's 'American Psycho,' a few years after the publication of 'Making Violence Sexy' in 1993. 'Rolling Stone' responded predictably."
13
5

Craft's follow-up post correcting her first announcement and reproducing Cleckley's more precise account of what Rolling Stone had done.

The correction does not weaken the story. It performs the opposite operation from the magazine's omission: it puts the names and the history back. Rolling Stone's Chris Heath quoted the sentence "There are better ways of taking care of Bret Easton Ellis than just censoring him," but did not identify Baxter or Craft. In the December 24, 1998-January 7, 1999 print issue, the magazine dismissed the

unnamed words as “nasty”—“not the fun kind”—inside a retrospective centered on Ellis. The online version is dated December 22, 1998.

The corrected sentence is less flattering and more revealing. Rolling Stone did not call Nikki Craft personally nasty; it called words she helped write nasty after stripping away the attribution that would have made the judgment part of her public record. That gives Craft’s Wikipedia joke a sharper underside. National coverage without a name is coverage that cannot readily become evidence about the woman whose work generated it. The joke remains a joke. The structural irony is real.

Correcting the boast was therefore not a retreat from the action. It was another act of restoration. Craft replaced a flattering inaccuracy with the more revealing fact that Ellis remained visible as artist and celebrity while the women whose political work Rolling Stone characterized had been denied both context and names.

The Top 5 SCARIEST Scenes from American Psycho (2000)

A blood-covered Patrick Bateman in the 2000 film adaptation. The imagery surrounding the named male antihero became mass entertainment; the women’s protest against the underlying violence was reduced to anonymous “nasty” language.

The “Fun” Kind and the “Not Fun” Kind

D.A. Clarke’s introduction to the Baxter-Craft essay supplied the analysis that Rolling Stone omitted. Clarke argued that a conventional erotic fantasy about a dominatrix and submissive men could find a commercial audience because the arrangement still served familiar sexual expectations. A feminist inquiry into

vengeance and justice was more disturbing because it treated female rage as political agency rather than entertainment.

Men's speech was elevated into an abstract right; women's speech was reduced to content and tone. Once Ellis's freedom to write became the organizing principle, what he wrote could disappear from scrutiny. Baxter and Craft's freedom, by contrast, became conditional on what they said and how acceptably they said it. Were they calm? Did they smile? Were they nice enough? Or were they "nasty"? The male artist's right swallowed his content. The women's content swallowed their right.

Rolling Stone's parenthetical—"not the fun kind"—tells on the distinction. It assumes that some nastiness is available as pleasure, style, provocation, or entertainment. In the passage Cleckley located, the magazine reserved "not fun" for the women's retaliatory language. Whatever the writer intended by the aside, its structure is revealing: male violence could be metabolized as culture, while female anger that refused to entertain became the threat.

The double standard is not that women are never shown committing violence. They are permitted to do so under conditions that contain, sexualize, trivialize, or ultimately punish them. What remains far more threatening is a woman who defines violence against women as intolerable and claims the authority to decide what resistance or self-defense requires.

The Top 5 SCARIEST Scenes from American Psycho (2000)

A woman under attack in the 2000 film adaptation of American Psycho. The movie turns Bateman's brutality into visible entertainment while the feminist response to that brutality was treated as the unacceptable speech.

Rolling Stone did not defend speech consistently. It defended male license and disciplined female dissent. It did not apply "nasty—not the fun kind" to the brutality Cleckley's article placed back in view; it applied the phrase to the women's retaliatory language. The represented violence retained the protections of art, satire, transgression, and literary controversy. Resistance to that violence became an unattributed offense.

When Rolling Stone disappeared the content of Ellis's book, it became editorially and culturally complicit in the mechanism the women opposed. That does not mean the magazine committed the fictional violence or bore legal responsibility for it. It means the magazine reproduced the protective operation: suppress the violence, center the named male artist, and transfer the stigma to the women who objected.

"Justice Is a Woman with a Sword"

The title Nemesis: Justice Is a Woman with a Sword was named after De Clarke's essay on the same topic. It was not decorative. It named the problem directly: justice is culturally imagined as legitimate when administered through institutions historically controlled by men, but female vengeance is treated as disorder even when it answers violence that those institutions failed to prevent.

Clarke's 1991 essay "Justice Is a Woman with a Sword" refuses both easy romanticism and easy condemnation. It asks feminists to think seriously about violence as a possible tool without pretending it is pure, uncomplicated, or incapable of corrupting those who use it. The essay remains available at NoStatusQuo, but it has become extraordinarily difficult to discover through ordinary web searches.

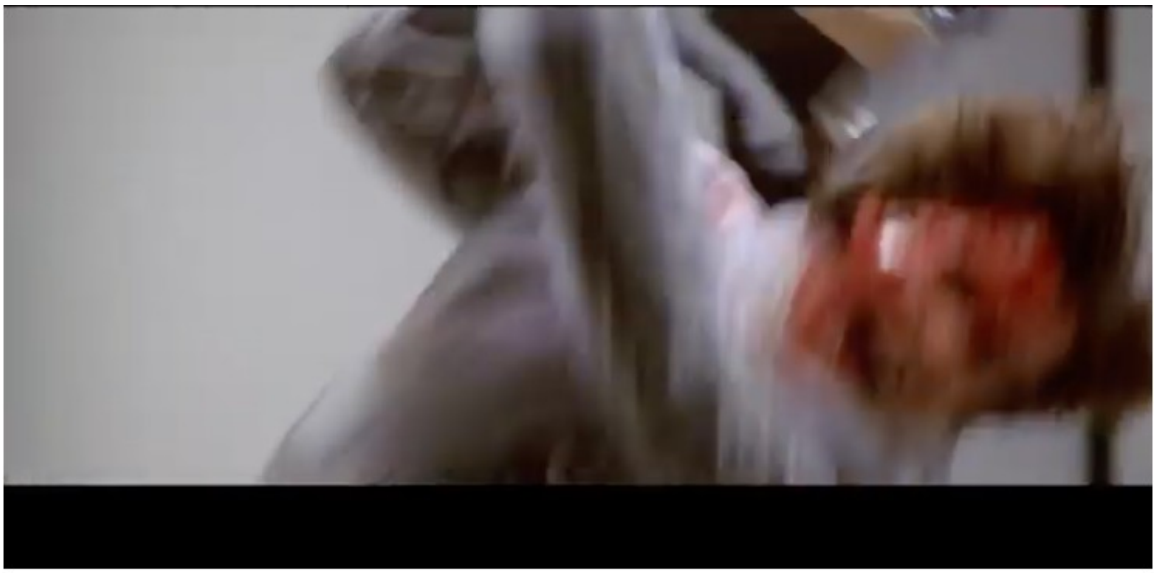
The Top 5 SCARIEST Scenes from American Psycho (2000)

Two bloodied women in the 2000 film adaptation of American Psycho. Bret Easton Ellis's character rapes, tortures, and kills throughout the story; these later film images make visible the violence that disappears when the controversy is retold as a problem of women's "nasty" words.

en.wikipedia.org
much on references to primary
Learn more
D. A. Clarke (also known as De Clarke and DeAnander) is an American radical feminist essayist and activist, notable for her development of feminist theory, and for the anonymous poem privilege.
D. A. Clarke
Writing career
Pen name
De Clarke or DeAnander
Language
English
Years active
1980–present
Notable work
Justice Is A Woman With A Sword
Literary movement
Radical feminism

Wikipedia identifies Justice Is a Woman with a Sword as D.A. Clarke's notable work, even as the original text has become difficult to find through ordinary searches. Screenshot supplied by Nikki Craft, August 24, 2026.

The Wikipedia screenshot creates its own irony. The encyclopedia names "Justice Is a Woman with a Sword" as Clarke's notable work, while the original essay survives on a page that search engines barely surface. A title can be recognized while the argument itself remains nearly invisible. This will be examined fully in a separate article about Wikipedia's treatment of Nikki Craft and D.A. Clarke. Here, Clarke's analysis provides the intellectual bridge between the Baxter-Craft protest and the longer history of women claiming the right to resist.



Patrick Bateman during another attack in the 2000 film adaptation. The repeated frames are intentional: the character's violence is not an incidental detail, yet the women who confronted that violence were framed as the disturbing element.

From "Nasty Woman" to Women Presumed Capable

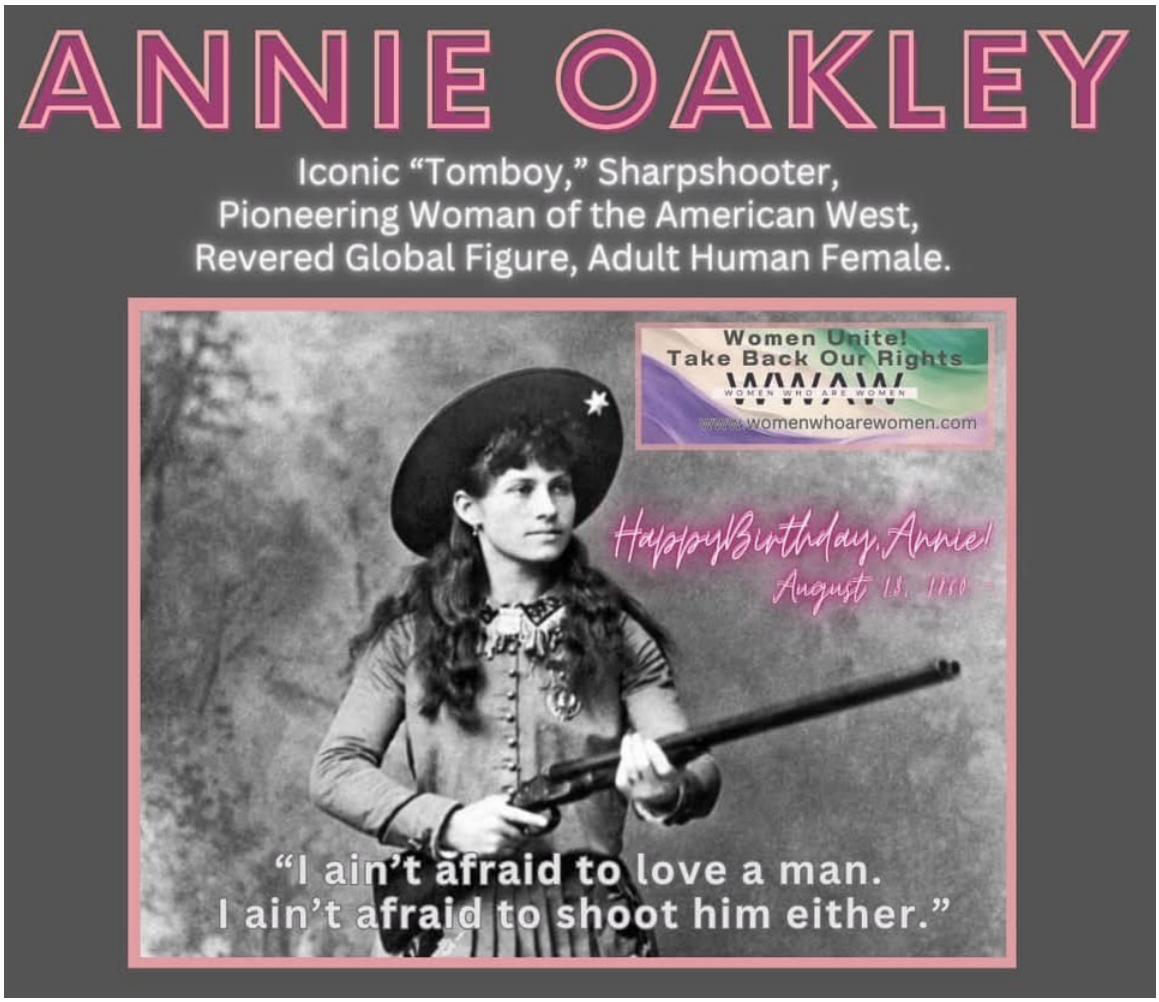
Cleckley's essay placed the Rolling Stone discovery inside a much longer history. Drawing on Carolyn Gage's "Why Annie Got Her Gun," he connected Annie Oakley's advocacy of firearms training for women to Craft's founding of Women Armed for Self-Protection (WASP) in 1975 and to her subsequent decades of activism.

Oakley did not become a conventional suffrage advocate, but she insisted that women learn to shoot. Gage described the radical implication: women's independence had to be asserted rather than granted. A female population capable of defending itself would alter the assumptions under which women moved through the world.

That principle also runs through Baxter and Craft's essay. Women should not have to remain silent, harmless, and reassuring while male violence is represented as fantasy, art, pornography, or ordinary domestic power. The connective tissue is agency: the refusal to accept women only as the objects of violence and the insistence that they can become subjects who judge, resist, and protect themselves.

The article's two framing graphics now make that movement visible. At the beginning, a mother explains to a girl that a "nasty woman" is a woman getting things done. Near the end, Annie Oakley appears as a woman whom others must

presume capable of defending herself. One image teaches a girl how to understand the insult. The other shows the adult political possibility hidden inside it.


ANNIE OAKLEY
Iconic "Tomboy," Sharpshooter,
Pioneering Woman of the American West,
Revered Global Figure, Adult Human Female.
Women Unite!
Take Back Our Rights
womenwhoarewomen.com
Happy Birthday, Annie!
August 13, 1860
"I ain't afraid to love a man.
I ain't afraid to shoot him either."

Annie Oakley graphic designed by Nikki Craft for a Women Who Are Women action, August 2023. The web address appearing in the original archival design is no longer active.

The Annie Oakley design did not emerge as an unrelated historical tribute. Craft made it as a statement about women's self-possession. Cleckley credited Vhey Benet for research assistance with the graphic and for the inspiration summarized in the phrase: "We need more Annies." Oakley, WASP, Clarke, and the protest against American Psycho belong here because each asks what changes when women are no longer presumed passive.

The Political Action Continues in the Restored Record

Craft's first Facebook claim was funny because it treated "nasty" as an honor and national condemnation as a credential. Her correction mattered because factual accuracy was more important than the better brag. It also demonstrated the

method this history requires: restore the author, publication, action, and political context to the fragment.

The original project was consciously designed to search for the limits of free speech and expose the sexual double standard in real time. It did not merely describe a culture that tolerated male fantasies of violence against women while recoiling from female rage and self-defense. Through reading, civil disobedience, publication, and deliberately confrontational language, it created situations in which institutions had to reveal what they would protect, punish, trivialize, or erase.

> *The action did not merely describe the double standard. It made the culture perform it.*

Rolling Stone's treatment became another stage of that action's evidence. It did not print Nikki Craft's name and then call her nasty. It first removed the content, the context, and the purpose of the misogynist work from view, then reduced language co-written by Tara Baxter and Nikki Craft to "nasty," removed both names, and stripped away the protest history that made the sentence intelligible. The accurate story has three acts: hide the violence, degrade the women's answer, and make the women disappear.

This article performs the inverse operation. It restores Baxter and Craft's names; identifies Craft's authorship of the title and their coauthorship of the essay; returns Baxter's bookstore arrest to the account; reconnects the title to Clarke, Nemesis, and Making Violence Sexy; and preserves the links through which readers can examine the record for themselves.

Bateman says, "but I'm not there," while remaining everywhere in the culture built around him. The wealthy fictional man who rapes, tortures, and kills remains visible as celebrity, meme, and style. Baxter and Craft were there too—in the byline, the action, and the archive—but the version most readers received erased them. Restoring that record is not merely retrospective commentary. It continues the political action by making the concealed content, names, and institutional responses visible again.

The women were never absent from the history. They were degraded, then made absent from the version most people were given.

> *Larry Flynt was nasty. Bret Easton Ellis is nasty.*

The deeper cultural obscenity is the reversal that turns men who commercialized women's degradation and brutality into free-speech martyrs, literary rebels, and cultural heroes, while treating the women who name the exploitation as prudish, censorious, threatening, or "nasty." The problem is not that the critics failed to be polite enough. The problem is that male exploitation was granted prestige and its critics were made into the offense.

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The full live address is printed beneath each source title.

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